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ABSTRACT

This report, from the Faculty Association of Community and Technical Colleges (FACTC) in Washington, focuses on various distance learning courses offered by the state's two-year colleges. The report contains 16 articles from faculty members and students, including: (1) "The Emperor's New Tutor: A Confession" (Sydney Wallace Stegall); (2) "Distance Learning: Nightmare and Dream" (Tom Pierce); (3) "An Art History Telecourse" (Vicki Atimovich); (4) "Grays Harbor in Cyberspace" (Mark Scholz); (5) "Telecourses as an Approach to Teaching," (Dale R. Croes); (6) "Television Stardom: My Distance Education Experience" (Jeffrey Waybright); (7) "A Virtual Reality," (Ed Reynolds); (8) "Telecampus Courses and the Idea of a 'ValuJet' College" (David Muga and Lynne Fouquette); (9) "How I Spent My Summer Vacation" (Barbara Guilland); (10) "Distance Learners and Libraries: What's the Connection?" (Jennifer L. Wu); (11) "Ten Big Myths about Copyright Explained" (Brad Templeton); (12) "Developing Interactive Classrooms" (Denise Yokum); (13) "Distance Education, Technology, and the Faculty" (Ron Gilster and Ann Suter); (14) "The Next Step" (Chuck Weedin); (15) "At the Washington Center Technology Conference" (Barbara Guilland, Leslie Michael, Ann Swanson, and Phyllis Villeneuve); (16) "Reflections from the Quality Principles in Distance Learning Retreat" (Bill Moore). The document concludes with a list of 1996-97 FACTC officers and representatives. (EMH)

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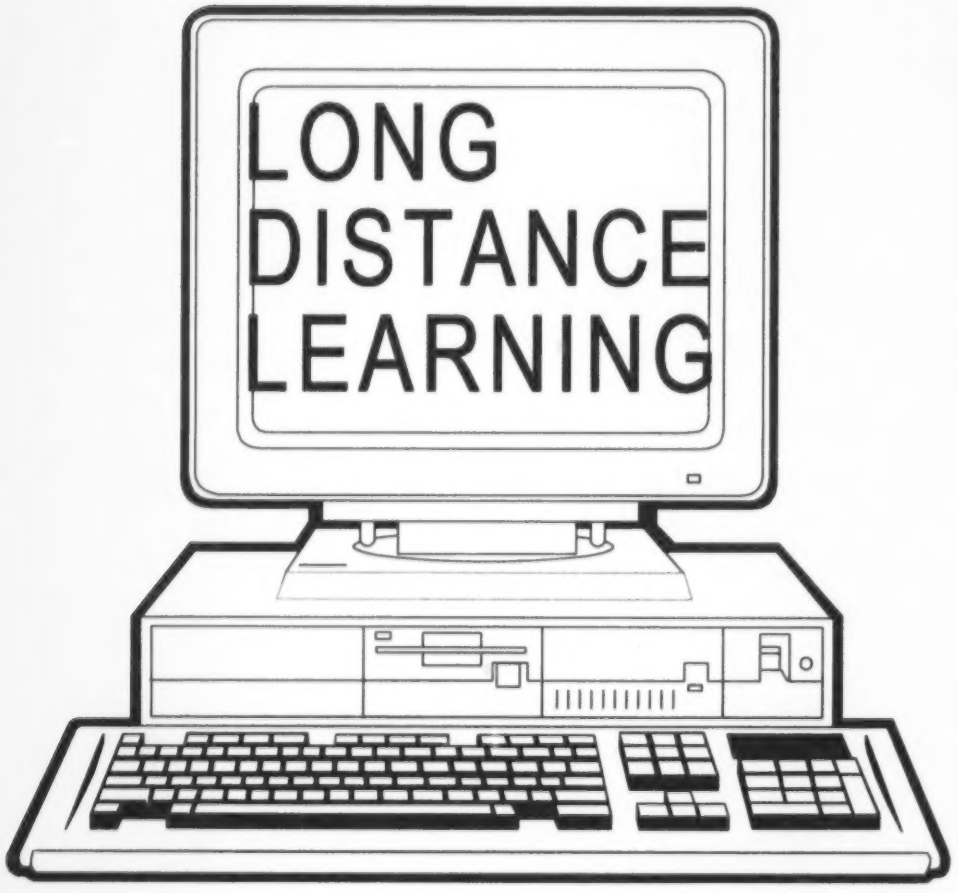

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Faculty Association of Community and Technical Colleges

THE EMPEROR'S NEW TUTOR: A CONFESSION

Sydney Wallace Stegall, PhD
Highline Community College

I do not surf the Net; rather, I welter in a sea of iconic arcana, sometimes endlessly pointing and clicking, occasionally crossing my fingers in the resigned hope that the server won't crash, frequently neglecting to make critical book-marks, and as often as not forgetting where I've been and what I'm search ing for in the first place. I am, you see, easily distracted on the information superhighway and must admit that I find it, at least in its present incarnation, about as inviting as Seattle's I -5 ... at rush hour... on a rainy Friday afternoon... in late December.

I am no technophile and would, any day, prefer to read a good book instead of my e -mail (most of which is, at best, non-sense), to watch a film by Kurosawa and not toy with Netscape, or to listen to the *Goldberg Variations* rather than idle about in a chat room. I have the psychological constitution (and some would say proprieties) of an eighteenth century country squire; yet, for reasons I will attempt to explain, I consistently incorporate state-of-the-art technologies in my classes with no end in sight. Why? Why do I go so against my very grain?

Recently, while doing a little cursory research, I made a terrible discovery: I sud denly realized that I have been, and still am, using technology for all the wrong reasons. While innocently wallowing from site to site in cyberspace trying to unearth the latest trends in distance education, I inadvertently kept bumping into the same curious notion. It seems (and I must cast this in the go -go jargon of contemporary educationese) that "instructor -centered learning" (aka "content -centered learning") has been, not so mercifully, supplanted by "learner - centered instruction." I was shocked. This innocuous little chiasmus exudes a clear and, at least for me, painfully strident message: the teacher is dead ... the lecture is irrevocably canceled ... long live tech nology and educational theory.

I keep repeating the same question, "Has 'instructor -centered learning' really transmogrified into 'learner -centered instruction?'" Or is it all a shell game?

My personal experience has taught me that we learn in two ways: by discovery (i.e., without benefit of a teacher) or through the instruction of teach ers, be they living or dead. I have been blessed in the com pany of some great living teachers: my sixth grade teacher, my theory teacher in high school, my private teacher at the conservatory, and the director of my doctoral dissertation. I have also been blessed by dead ones: Sophocles and Shakespeare, Eckehart and Dante, Vico and Webern, Boole and Peirce, Freud and Mahler, Einstein and Eisenstein, Joyce and Lao -tzu, et al. These are the very teachers with whom I want my students to study; I simply function as the middleman. I want to deliver their messages, intact, to my students.

To accomplish this, I must rely on the four current categories of delivery systems: audio, video, data, and print. My classes in music, mass media, and film are, by definition, "media dependent." Although I use such "passive" audio technologies as tape, CD, and even the phonograph to introduce my students to great music, I require them to listen actively, critically, and analytically. I use video for the same basic reason: to expose my students to the greatest of primary sources, and hence teachers, be they films or video recordings of the world's finest performers. I fail to understand how listening to or viewing great works can be labeled "passive." Only the dead listen passively to a late Beethoven quartet or view a Wellesian image with silent eyes.

I am also perplexed by current attitudes toward the print media. According to the pundits of distance education, Guttenberg's legacy would seem to reside today in case studies, syllabi, study guides, workbooks, and the most jejune of all print banalities: the textbook. Primary texts --our direct access to the communications of great teachers --don't seem to be a consideration. In fact, the tacit assumption is that print is another "passive" medium, that reading is a "passive" activity. (Obviously, *Finnegan's Wake* doesn't play well in distance education.) Have we forgotten both how to read and what to read?

I have attempted to remedy this abysmal situation by resurrecting my dust -covered, acid-eroded copy of Mortimer J. Adler's *How to Read a Book,* which I am using as a survival manual for distance education as the millennium dawns. I seem to have more than adequate access to gridlock on the information superhighway but no trustworthy

guide to help me make that perilous trek toward the understanding that I want to share with my students. Adler, I believe, can help cut such a path.

According to him, we can read for amuse ment or for knowledge; I merely extend his principles to listening and viewing. If we choose knowledge, then we can read for information or for understanding. We can harvest an abundance of information, a plethora of meaningless facts and redundant data, but true understanding lies only in the original communications of the great teachers, be they authors, composers, artists, or film -makers. Understanding lies in great works, and great works are the products of great minds. While there are those today who would seem to be ashamed of greatness, I want to lead my students to it and have them stand in awe of it. Technology offers us gifts that have the potential to dissolve the distance that separates our students from such greatness.

I want my students to be able to analyze great works, to intelligently interpret them, and to exercise critical judgment on them. I want them to know that Mozart carries more meaning than Madonna, that Buster Keaton is infinitely more satisfying than the latest Fox sitcom, that there are more pleasures to be found in the Hermitage than in porno, that Michael Jackson pales in the presence of John Coltrane. I want them to know the difference between junk and treasure. Lawrence Welk and Arturo Toscanini both held batons, but there all similarities end.

To paraphrase Adler, I want my students to ask four basic questions whenever and wherever they encounter a teacher, be it in a classroom, on the pages of a book, in a hushed theatre, or on the Net. First, what exactly is being said? Second, how is it said? Third, is it true? And fourth, is it significant? If they are able to ask these four questions, they will be able to plough through both cyberbabble and educationese. The real teachers, the great ones, will not hesitate to answer.

DISTANCE LEARNING: NIGHTMARE AND DREAM

Tom Pierce, South Seattle Community College

When I began teaching three decades ago I had a nightmare. I stood in front of a class and announced that the day's subject would be Plato's Republic. I looked down at the podium and discovered that I didn't have a copy of The Republic. Also, no notes. I then realized that I hadn't actually ever gotten around to reading The Republic. Finally, as I stammered that I wasn't prepared I saw that I wasn't wearing any clothes.

If I were still subject to teaching nightmares, I might now conjure a microphone dangling from my naked body, the relentless eye of a TV camera replacing living students and a technician saying, " That's all very interesting about Plato's Allegory of the Cave, but your make -up is running and your black -and-white graphics are pathetic. Didn't you ever learn Powerpoint? We can hire an actor to read your script, you know. At least actors are smart enough to wear clothes."

This, of course, is my distance learning nightmare. Many teachers I have talked to have similar fears. They dread they won't be able to master the technology of distance learning, that they will not make personal connections with their students, that they will lose ownership of their ideas, notes, presentations and course materials when their work is recorded on school videotape or computer drives. They also worry that the new electronic media will blunt their effectiveness or make them look ridiculous or even cost them their jobs. Even those pioneer teachers who are already teaching at a distance wonder if they are doing their best for students or if they are merely making life more comfortable for those in charge.

Distance learning isn't a nightmare for everyone. Education theorists and college administrators often dream of providing greater access for students in remote locations, for students unable to travel or attend during regular class hours, for disabled students. Colleges will become global villages bringing together people from all cultures and all countries. There will be more mundane advantages, too. Distance learning will save gasoline, eliminate pollution and highway congestion, lower heating and lighting bills, obviate new building and parking lot construction and generate thousands of new low -cost FTE's.

Why do faculty and administrators see this phenomenon so differently? I

suspect the primary reason is that faculty do not trust the intentions of those advocating distance learning. The distance learning movement has not been a faculty initiative. Its impetus has come from the top, from administrators, bureaucrats and state legislators, and some of those people speak of distance learning as a way to "streamline," "downsize," make education more "cost effective," and weaken those pesky teachers' unions.

To some extent faculty and administrators will always be adversaries on this issue, just as they are on so many others. However, this need not mean warfare. Conflict can be reduced if both sides agree on the following:

1. Distance learning is neither as good nor as bad as it is made out to be. It won't create the happy global village, but it won't replace teachers with automata either. Distance learning will work for some kinds of courses but not others. It can be effective at imparting new information. For example, hazardous waste managers who need to learn about new regulations can get them through distance learning as easily as through classroom instruction. Even courses which require more interactivity, such as philosophy or writing, may work with two -way video or modem hook -ups. Lab courses, performance classes and many others will still require face-to-face learning.

2. Distance learning should only be used to benefit students. Administrators sometimes use popular distance learning courses as giant FTE generators, packing hundreds of students into one course serviced by one instructor and a few graders. Faculty sometimes see distance learning courses, especially telecourses with their prepared videos, as easy money and treat seldom -seen distance learning students as second class citizens. Neither of these prac tices puts students first.

3. There are no reliable data on the efficacy of most distance learning technologies. What little we know comes from studies of courses which simply convey information and machine -test out-comes. This is because this kind of performance can be measured, and the studies do show that distance learning conveys information as well as face -to-face teaching. What we don't know, and can't yet measure, is the effect of removing personal, daily contact between students and teachers. We should begin small, grow slowly and monitor the results carefully.

Whatever we may wish, distance learn ing is with us and will grow in importance for some time. Those faculty who work at campuses where distance learning is still new and union contracts do not address distance learning issues need advice on how to begin. Dave Sujak, an experienced negotiator at Elgin (Illinois) Community College, listed these as the most important goals in negotiating a distance learning agreement:

1. Get a clear definition of distance learning. It should include a clause that requires some immediate interaction with students even if that must be carried on by modem or two -way video. This will prevent schools from offering "canned" courses with little or no faculty supervision.

2. Property rights to materials (vid eos, web pages, etc.) created by faculty should be secured to faculty. Copyright law confers ownership of materials created with school funds on schools, but that can be abrogated by contract. At the very least faculty should strive for some control over how their materials are used and should receive royalties when their work is used by others.

3. Class size for distance learning classes should be about the same as for traditional classes. Some teachers even believe that intensely interactive modem-based courses must be smaller than usual. Communicating by e -mail is simply more time -consuming than classroom discussion or office conferences.

4. Distance learning courses should count toward workload but should never be required.

5. Refusal to teach distance learning should not be grounds for discipline or dismissal.

Teaching will never again be simply students, a teacher, a room, chalk and a board. Nor should it be. Distance learning will work, but only if teachers and administrators together plan programs which enhance and complement teachers' skills and, most importantly, which maintain the highest academic standards.

AN ART HISTORY TELECOURSE

Vicki Atimovich,
Bellevue Community College

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Sharing knowledge is the first and foremost goal of education. Based on the original ideas of Plato's Academia in Athens, education involves a give and take of knowledge, thoughts and, ultimately, wisdom. It is not and never was meant to be a one-way street or even an "information highway" (information does not make one wise but only "informed"). This is why when I was first approached to do a telecourse I flatly refused. Teach without students? Why it was like having a meal with only the plate. The whole concept of sharing knowledge would be lost. Instead of the joy that I get from interacting with my students, with their curiosity and awe at what we study, at their willingness to critique and judge and ponder world-class art, I would become a veritable "talking head". Teaching is a performance art but it's a performance that relies on "hecklers". We want a response, we want to be interrupted and asked for clarification or offered yet new insights. God knows I could smother any student with gratitude for simply raising a hand because they had a thought or an idea to share with me and the class.

Why did I finally assent? I realized that many students find it difficult if not impossible to come to campus for classes--I could reach so many who might not be reached at all. And, in fact, the very idea that so many non-Bellevue Community College students could also benefit from becoming a bit more "image literate" seemed to balance the scales in favor of the telecourses. So I said yes.

The first telecourse of my Art History 201 class (Art of the Ancient World) was done live with a small class of students in the studio so I had the interaction I wanted and, in fact, this is still my favorite telecourse for that reason. The later two (Art History 201 [again] and Art History 202) were done without a class and in the studio which I felt killed the spontaneity. The argument against the "live" production was that we could make it appear more "professional." I felt it merely deadened and stultified the entire production. It was no longer true education; it was just a program about art.

Producing a telecourse takes a great deal of initial extra time and preparation. Figure on 2-3 hours in the studio for every hour of class. But, once it's "in the can," that's it. The class can be used over and over. This is what also makes it more appealing, economically speaking. Each time you "teach" the telecourse, you get paid. Subsequent airings require little prep aration. In my case, I hold a weekly review session for students and I act as a T.A. for my own course, reviewing the material presented in the videos. The review sessions do seem to help the students a great deal. Unfortunately some students come to the reviews only and never watch a video. Some of the other drawbacks for the student are, of course, INPUT--they are supposed to bring their questions to the review session (or they can call me at anytime on the office phone and leave a message). Some do, more do not. Students often forget that watching the videos is the equivalent of attending class. But, because they're just "watching T.V." they don't take notes. Even though they have options like "rewind" that normal in-class students don't have, I find they do not do as well grade-wise as my in-class students. There are always exceptions, of course. Occasionally I have a telecourse group that does better than my regular classes, but that is rare.

One of the thrills of teaching via video is the stories I hear about students watching with their children. One of my students said her 5-year old likes my show better than Sesame Street! I get quite a bit of "fan mail" from moms whose kids are getting turned on to art as well as from retired folks who tune in and watch the shows just for fun. I have to admit it is extremely ego satisfying. However, all the above considered, I am still somewhat negative in my overall view of the telecourse teaching method. Distant learning is exactly that, "distant." The gap here is one that causes confusion for many students. The teacher is equated with T.V. characters and becomes separated from the real world--you're not really there; you're on T.V. You're a "packaged" personality, not a human being. This causes more than just "distance" between teacher and student; it makes one seem unapproachable, unreal. Without the review sessions there would be no interaction at all and that would be a dreadful loss. As it is, students are not as comfortable with a teacher they see only on their T.V. screens. We should be spending more time with students, not less. As Wood and Valensuela point out in their article, "The Crisis of American Education" in the current issue of Thought and

Action (an NEA publication):

"Distance learning...is billed as a means to provide universal access to quality higher education (and) also perceived to be a money saver--if used to replace faculty in the higher education equation. Distance learning should be used to 'supplement' classroom instruction. Misused, it can eliminate the classroom as a place where faculty and students engage in scholarly dialogue. Unless faculty, staff, and students participate in the creation of distance learning programs, these programs could easily become online diploma mills.

Ironically, the same administrators and critics who accuse faculty of not spending enough time with students are now often beating the drums for distance learning--and the absence of student-faculty interaction that comes with it."

I have to agree.

GRAYS HARBOR IN CYBERSPACE

Mark Scholz, History Instructor

At Grays Harbor College in the Winter Quarter of 1997, we will be trying our first experiment with Distance Learning over the Internet. The course (HIST 103, Western Civilization), inspired by a group of instructors who attended the UWIRED conference last summer, is currently in the planning stages, but we have already faced some interesting questions and challenges. Administration has been very supportive and has expressed interest in allowing the course to evolve and serve as a model for future offerings in other fields. With administrative help we have arranged for a local Internet provider to give a special quarterly rate to students who do not have email and are just getting on the Internet for the first time. We will however have a fair number of students who will use campus computers and will work on site. For these students the attraction of the course is the time flexibility it will allow—they can work on the course material at any available time and are not limited to an hour in a classroom.

The basic course material will consist of 23 episodes, on video, of the *Western Tradition* by Eugen Weber, and assigned readings from the textbook *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics and Society Volume II* , by Marvin Perry, et al. These will be supplemented by mini-lectures and by extracts from original sources which will be provided by email. Students will be asked to respond to questions based on the week's material and to follow up on conversations generated by the material. Since we are just starting, and do not have an available server, I will collect, edit, and re-transmit student responses to keep conversations going. Term papers will probably be required, but they will be rather modest in scope as we expect that students will not have much access to research materials. Thought pieces, essays, and email responses will make up the majority of the required writing.

Everything has gone smoothly up to this point, and we have generated a fair amount of student interest (the course is capped at 15 and is almost filled) but some questions still remain to be answered: Will the students be self-motivated enough to handle this type of course? Will technology provide us with new learning opportunities, or will it get in the way of real learning? Do our students have enough basic computer skills to handle this teaching method? Will this sort of course teach students enough important new skills to justify the absence of classroom contact with the instructor? Have we anticipated the kinds of technological problems we might have? Can we truly foster the creation of a *virtual* community and get real discussions going? Will the Internet and video sections of the class mesh well, or will it seem to the students like there is a tension between two instructor "voices" (we hope to discontinue the video aspect of the course as soon as we have listserve capability and a fully developed website, which will allow student access to more fully developed electronic lecture materials). Who are our students and why are they attracted to such a course? Are there significant differences between this student group and traditional distance learning students? These and many other issues will be closely monitored as the course develops. Each student will fill out a detailed questionnaire at the end of the quarter and the results should greatly aid us in future planning.

The course is a pilot for what could be further course offerings at GHC. We are looking forward to learning about what works and what does not work in this " Brave New World" of distance learning in cyberspace.

TELECOURSES AS AN APPROACH TO TEACHING

Dale R. Croes, Anthropology, South Puget Sound Community College

I have been involved in teaching two tele course programs through the years, **Faces of Culture (Introduction to Cultural Anthropology 103)** and **Out of the Past (Introduction to Archaeology 104).** Both courses are packaged with professionally produced videos that are set up for this kind of course. In my field of anthropology, these videos provide an opportunity to visit other cultures and archaeological sites from throughout the world, providing excellent visuals for introductory students. In many ways they can visit other cultures and sites better than through class room lectures.

Two major ingredients are necessary for a successful telecourse class:

1. **Excellent learning materials** including textbooks, guides to the telecourse and well-done videos, and

2. **Students who can depend on themselves** to keep up (which has to be greatly stressed at orientation), and if they know they tend to procrastinate, it can greatly affect their performance in this type of class. They cannot read the materials and watch the videos the day of the test!

I know from the learning materials that they can easily learn as much or more from this class as they can from a traditional type class, but, as in a regular class, they have to do the work as scheduled. Since I know that the class materials are excellent, and in some ways better than in a regular class, I know the right kind of students can learn the necessary materials.

In terms of class structure, we have a required orientation where a detailed syllabus is distributed and all schedules ex plained. The videos can be watched on a local cable station, checked out from our library or watched in our library (some schools also rent the whole set of 20 programs as an option). They read required chapters from the text and telecourse guide book. The students are encouraged to do the exercises in the guidebook and optionally can buy a study guide to the text book. I also offer optional reviews of materials once a week during the evening class period, which about half the students take advantage of, though I highly recommend they all attend. The tests are 70 multiple choice questions that take an hour, and three are given during the quarter. The test results certainly indicate whether they have covered all the materials. A paper can also be assigned as an extra credit or option for students who prefer to do research and writing projects.

Therefore telecourses are excellent learning programs for busy students who know they work well under these alternative educational structures. I highly recommend them if the two criteria outlined above can be met.

TELEVISION STARDOM: MY DIS TANCE EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Jeffrey Waybright, Accounting Instructor, Lower Columbia College

Last spring quarter, I was approached by an individual on our campus who was charged with the task of expanding our distance education offerings. Dave's question to me was simple: would I be willing to do LCC's first televised course that was not a "canned' course that we had purchased from an outside source? It seems like I have always been pretty good at engaging my mouth before putting my brain in gear so of course I said sure I'll do it. We got together and decided that the easiest thing to do would be to take one of my existing Accounting courses and broadcast it live while I teach a tra ditional classroom full of students. I was somewhat con cerned when I realized that this meant that my teaching performance would be "beamed" into several thousand homes during prime time two nights a week for ten weeks. After all, in the classroom the only people that are watching are my students who know less than me - they won't know whether what I'm saying is really correct. Now that my class is televised, I might actually be watched by people who know more than me, like my peers in the ac counting profession. Dave eased these fears by stating "Come on Jeffrey, get real, who's gonna watch you teach accounting when they could be watching Vanna turn numbers instead". I thought to myself - yeah you're right and blindly went ahead with the class. Now that I have almost completed teaching the course for the first time, here are some observations that I would like to share with others who are

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contemplating doing the same thing:

- Is doing a televised course more work than a regular course? Absolutely, but it wasn't that bad since I had more prep time for each class. However, communicating with the DE students was not as easy as it normally is. It also changed my ability to use hand-outs spontaneously. I had to prepare everything far enough in advance so that I could mail it to my DE. students. I got around this somewhat by using overheads for items that I wanted to introduce on the spur of the moment.

- Are televised courses good for all students? I would have to answer "no" to this one. I have students who are doing exceptionally well and others who are failing. However, I believe that televised offerings are a better alternative than other forms of DE for many students because they allow both audio and visual presentation of the materials. We also had telephones in the classroom so that students viewing at home could call in with questions. It was the next best thing to being there.

- Are televised courses good for all faculty? No way! If you are overly conscious about being on camera, then the class will probably come off as mediocre at best. During the first few classes, I was very consumed with the camera. I spent more time looking at it instead of concentrating on the material that I was presenting. When I was able to tune out the cameras and teach the way I normally teach in any other classroom, the delivery of the material became smooth and my comfort level went way up.

- Were the only people watching just those individuals that had signed up for the course as I had anticipated? No, I guess not everybody likes Vanna. It seems as though the entire county has tuned into the program at one time or another. I forgot that people like to channel surf these days. Everywhere I go people say "aren't you the guy that teaches that class on TV?"

- Do I think it was worth the effort? You bet. As a matter of fact I plan on offering the follow-up accounting class as a televised class during winter quarter. Based solely on additional FTE's, I wouldn't call this class a success as I only had five DE students. However, those were five more students than I probably would have had if I had not offered the televised option and I still had good enrollment in the traditional portion of the class. I also think that this was a great promotional tool for the college. Many people may watch part of the course and develop an interest in taking the course. Even though they may not end up taking the course through DE, it is the DE offering that might encourage them to enroll for other courses on our campus. I was also able to use the course as a tutoring aid for students in my other sections of the same course. I would encourage students who were having trouble understanding the material to watch the televised classes in addition to attending their normally scheduled classes. This seemed to be very useful for many students. Also, students who missed their normal class due to illness or vacations could watch (or tape) the televised class and therefore "make up" for the class that they missed.

If you decide to offer a televised class my recommendation would be to bring the studio to your normal classroom. I think that you and the traditional students taking the class will be more at ease and your class will go much smoother. We had to set up my classroom in the local TV studio and it really did not make for a good classroom setting.

If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at jwaybrig@ctc.edu. Good luck, I'll see you at the Oscars.

A VIRTUAL REALITY

Ed Reynolds, Instructor of English
Spokane Falls Community College

At Spokane Falls, we stumbled into offering English 101 via the internet with nearly all classwork conducted by e-mail in response to instructions posted on a web site (http://207.53.139.40). This winter will be the fourth

quarter in which we've offered the course and the third quarter in which I've taught it. Herewith are some thoughts about a major limitation of such courses.

A course like this is not for most students. In each of the three quarters it's been offered, we've begun with 28 people en rolled (the cap for English 101) and ended with four or five people earning 2.0 or better. This fall quarter 11 students turned in none of the assignments, 2 nearly none. Thirteen turned in mid-quarter portfolios, 5 final. Of those 5, one turned in 6 papers, only one of which I'd previously seen. (He didn't pass.)

Why this attrition rate? One student wrote, "It must be frustrating for you to teach a bunch of people that don't read everything and your [sic] not in front of a class to yell at us." Students who sign up for a course like this give up the external discipline of a regular daily schedule, the chance to hear instructions as well as to see them in print, the information gained from conversations on the way to and from class, and who knows what else. Most have no idea how dependent they are on having access to information via various paths. Here, they must take in most of their instruction simply by reading, and they must be able to follow directions. Our students don't do that well. That's one reason they drop out or fail.

Another is that students don't know technology or handle frustrations with it very well. Many students register for the course having produced a few documents on a word processor using the default margins, fonts, etc. They typically do not have, cannot find, or don't know how to use manuals for their software. Some do not even know the name of their software. As a result, we may spend two weeks trying to figure out why I can't receive a student's documents only to learn, for example, that he's using Works and doesn't know how to save his document in a Word Perfect format so that he can transmit it to me in a form my computer can read. Our initial cautions about Works are lost on him because all he knows is that he has a computer with a word processor. But even experts suffer. This fall Spokane suffered severe power outages, and one of my students who is a computer expert lost all his files and did not finish the course. He'd built a sophisticated tape backup system and saw no need to save documents on a floppy disk until it was too late. Sudden collapses of systems, be they Washington Water Power or an individual computer, failures of service providers, ignorance of hardware or software--all can put a student irretrievably behind, particularly if he's marginally behind to begin with.

A third reason for high attrition is that students begin with unrealistic expectations. Two excerpts from a student paper: "It was my belief that I would sail through the writ ing assignments while the small children were napping and the big kid in school. I learned quickly that children nap when they want to, not when Mom has homework, and that I am incapable of doing homework when one wants my attention." "I enrolled with a faintly superior attitude regarding community college English courses. I believe my exact words were: 'How hard can it be?' After my first essay was graded, I knew how hard it was going to be." One student has completed his third unsuccessful attempt at the internet 101 but is still convinced he can juggle this course, the on-campus courses he's taking, his day job and his gigs with a traveling band. He'll try again in the winter.

We've spent many years in my department working on prerequisite testing and placement so that our classroom 101s wouldn't suffer high attrition, and we've succeeded. Distance learning courses, though, commonly seem to lose 50% or more of their students, and I think that's unjustifiably high. College courses should, I think, be demanding, but I have a hard time justifying the acceptance of tuition from students that we know are going to fail. My department will allow a weak student to enroll for English 101, but only after the student has twice challenged the placement and has signed a waiver saying she's been warned. Yet we'll allow anyone who's qualified for 101 to register for the internet course. Students certainly don't come to us with good preparation for independent learning, and until they do, we might do them and ourselves a service by screening them before they register for distance learn ing. At the very least, it seems, some truth in advertising is in order--perhaps a warning on the course listing that dropout and failure rates are high.

If I whip the attrition problem, I have another one that hits closer to home--my work load. Folks who have some experience seem to agree that the workload in an

internet course is at least double that of a classroom course. It's a little hard for me to gauge yet because I have yet to deal with anything like a full class for a full quarter and because I'm not a good bookkeeper. I have lots of hours in learning hardware and software, coping with one-time problems, preparing course materials, looking at what other people are doing, and so forth, but my guess is that this particular distance learning course will be a real time con sumer. My colleagues comment on the amount of time I spend in front of my computer.

The burning question, of course, is whether distance learning is worth the time and money we spend on it. I don't know, and I don't think anyone else does either. Telecourses have been around for a long time and don't show any signs of being abandoned, so I imagine that at least some of the green eyeshade folks have deemed them economically feasible. For some students, this internet course has offered opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have. (My student who runs her own business out of her home in remote northern Washington or my student who commutes weekly to his job 200 miles away are pretty good examples.) Certainly computers and internet access are becoming more nearly universal, and it does seem that we'd be terribly myopic if we didn't at least experiment with the capabilities offered. And of course we've long claimed that our goal is to make lifelong learners of people, so perhaps by introducing them to some of the demands of independent learning we're making some progress in that direction. Selfishly speaking, I'm learning a tremendous amount about teaching and learning, about the differences between linear and non-linear texts, about computers and, I'm sure, about a lot of things I'm not yet aware of. On the basis of my experience, I wouldn't yet plan on putting a lot of seats in the virtual classroom or a lot of classrooms in the virtual university, but I'm not ready to abandon the effort. The main impetus behind the virtual university seems to be it is a great way to educate the masses without having to spend much time or money, and I think that's a pipe dream. Still, for some students the virtual classroom offers access to education that wouldn't otherwise be available, and that makes the effort worthwhile as long as it's approached sensibly.

TELECAMPUS COURSES AND THE IDEA OF A "VALU JET" COLLEGE

David Muga and Lynne Fouquette
Skagit Valley College

It sounded like a good idea when we were first approached a few years ago with the newest rave in the application of technology to the educational enterprise. The argument was that there was a whole "market" of place- and site-bound students, special learners who did best on their own motivation and time schedules, who would benefit from the distance eucation. services our college could provide and allow for the completion of credits which otherwise might not get addressed by the student. From the instructor's viewpoint, it seemed straightforward enough: combine a set of video showings with text readings, add weekly quizzes, mid-terms and final exams - all of which could be "front-end loaded" - and all that was left to do was the inevitable grading and occasional "maintenance" of the materials which would be sent to interested students as a packet of information at the beginning of each quarter.

Still there were hesitations: the relative lack of contact between instructor and student, the absence of dialogue so important to student peer outcomes and the context of students learning from other students, the one-dimensional aspect of the assessment process based wholly on cryptic written exercises, the heavy reliance on multiple choice testing procedures, and the mechanical nature of a process that appeared to emphasize efficiencies in knowledge acquisition, all of which seemed to set off alarm bells in relation to the quality of education that distance education students would be receiving with this kind of technology application. Our underlying assumptions, of course, were that as the process repeated itself, it would be subject to review, assessment, and re-evaluation based on criteria of the quality of the educational experience provided and that this review, if not directly under the control of the distance education faculty, would at least reflect significant input from the instructors involved in this innovative experiment.

Boy, were we wrong! Once this experiment took off, other

factors immediately began to drive it in directions antithetical to what we, as instructors, like to think of as quality education. First was the success of the telecampus program in terms of sheer numbers. It caught on quickly with students but not necessarily with those who were site-bound. Recent surveys of tele campus stu dents have shown that students take these courses for any variety of reasons having little connection to conditions of being place-bound. Often, the tele courses are taken simply as a convenient substitute for courses students need to graduate but which do not fit the student's schedule or course sequence. Particularly disturbing is the reputation telecourses are getting through the informal student grapevine: the telecourses are easier and less demanding. And why wouldn't a student choose a telecourse over the departmental curricula for the same number of credits and not have to put up with group work, term papers, pop quizzes, and the interminable assignments and classroom dia logue? Are we measuring quality education on the basis of sheer numbers?

Second, the incessant reference to distance education technology as Alvin Toffler's Third Wave by college administrators and legislators provides the distinct impression that distance education technology is being counted on not only as an immediate solution to educational access but also as a long-range solution to educational delivery in a restructured economy in which educational funding is restricted. It is the way in which the social organization of this technology is being imposed in the field of education that is really frightening here since there is such a high set of expectations around distance learning but without any concrete or demonstrated connection with what learning is about or what quality education in this context consists of. The point is that in the rush to assume a forward position in terms of the application of technology to the diversity of learning processes, somehow no accompanying dialogue or ventilation of how this technology is related to quality learning has actually been created on campus.

Third, the "maintenance" and "front-end loading" parts of this process have by now become crystallized in workload issues that are, or should be, part of the bargaining agreement. It turns out that periodic revision and upscaling of quizzes, exercises, and exams which are part of the telecourse package as well as additions to web pages and technology web sites were never factored into the costs of the distance learning program. Apparently, technology administrators expected this continuing labor to be unpaid work. The outcome is that this technology becomes just another way to increase intellectual productivity of in structors at lowered costs and, in effect, to utilize distance learning technology as a weapon to increase efficiency and rationalization of the local educational enterprise.

Related to this is the increasing use of tele campus course links (writing links especially). The problem here is that these links require more work and instructor input (crafting writing exercises, collaborating with other instructors, more grading, etc.) than the stand-alone telecourses. Yet, instructors are not being offered reciprocal salary compensation for this increased work load. It's all put into the all-pervasive idiom of bringing more choices to students and the incremental increases in workload here and there are apparently assumed to be of no consequence. This is, of course, a horrific undervaluation of the role of the instructor.

Fourth, the issue of class size comes up in regard to payment for services rendered. Because distance learning class size has not been bargained but has rather been (administratively) pegged at thirty students as a "regular" class load, we have situations occuring at our college where distance learning instructors are teaching their courses two or three times before they meet the regular class load requirement. In each instance, student numbers below the regular class load are "rolled over" into the following quarter with the result that instructors' compensation is delayed until class size is met. Here, distance learning technology becomes simply an administrative device for cheapening wages and for enhancing overall control of educational delivery.

What all this comes down to is the emergent creation of a Valujet College in which every single learning activity is oriented for producing profit and the structure of education is unhesitatingly refashioned on a business model. Students become paying clients and distance education becomes a method for "outsourcing" traditional teaching and learning relationships to cheaper labor -

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adjuncts, part-timers, graduate students, or anyone desperate enough to accept lowered wages. Distance learning technology then becomes nothing more than a tool for disciplining faculty and destroying unions or anything else that might stand in the way of its ability to pay for itself while providing a tidy surplus administrators can distribute over budget lines to guarantee the viability of the college institution in an era of financial instability and retrenchment. The danger is that as in creasing levels of outreach become more and more profitable, quality education runs the risk of also being defined predominately in monetary outcomes.

But distance learning technology does not have to be devoid of creative, rigorous scholarship or a profoundly humanistic approach that puts learning and students first, rather than profits or numbers. We don't have to crash into the swamp of "tech nology at any cost" or use technology as a shortcut to the achievement of teaching excellence or even as a substitute for what really counts as a quality learning experience. Potentially, there are enormous educational benefits that can be derived from the application of distance learn ing technology. However, we must reject the idea that distance learning instructors are mere capital for institutional needs. We can "practice what we teach," view ourselves as colleagues, and work to put a brake on some of the exploitation and inequities that are mounting as this technology is more and more saddled with a "quick-fix" ideology that is running cover for inescapable contradictions in the larger political economy.

HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION

Barbara Guilland
Big Bend Community College

I spent part of my summer vacation cruis ing the internet to Chemeketa Community College to take a course about teach ing online. This was a time consuming and sometimes frustrating but enlightening activity in which all the caveats mentioned in the introduction to the course eventually were demonstrated in the process of taking the course. The major issues were technology compatibility, the technical expertise of instructors and students, the learning and teaching styles most compatible with a highly textual and very structured presentation of material, and communication and time managment skills for both instructor and class. This is not to mention related issues such as how to count credit for courses, how instructors should be paid, what the size of classes should be, how to decide what kinds of classes are effective on the internet and many more. There is no end to issues.

What I'm going to do in this short piece is outline the course that I took using it to show you a the model of an effective online course. Once we had registered for the course, which was at least a month before the official beginning, we were welcomed to the class by an e-mail message and immediately given some exercises to measure our expertise at sending messages over e-mail, reading and replying to messages and attaching files to e-mail messages. The instructor and technical support then should have had enough time to work out compatibility problems with hardware and software (actually they didn't have enough time!), and the instructor could assess the technical expertise of the students. This was also a good time to talk to potential students about the nature of online courses and whether they are prepared to learn almost entirely from text either in book form or in electronic impulses on a screen. In addition, students have more success if they have some idea of their preferred learn ing style and their time management skills because it is so easy to consume time (and money) on the internet. The course was divided into a session delineating the core elements of an online course and a second session devoted to issues related to online instruction. (In my case, in the second session I tried to convert [rewrite] one of my regular courses into an online course.)

In session one, after we had introduced ourselves to each other on the bulletin board with short bios, we read the seminar lectures and the assigned reading material and then responded to them on the bulletin board set up for the course. We responded to instructor questions about the material, and we were asked to reply to a certain number of other classmates' responses so that a three way conversation was established between the individual student, classmates, and seminar leader. Then finally we were asked to come to some conclusions about the topic of discussion.

Responses were sometimes given as papers with a specific assignment following each section of the session. We could immediately begin to see that some of the advantages of the face-to-face classroom disappear on line: ability to "wing it" with lectures, being able to tell immediately whether students are "getting it," loss of the reinforcement of learning through daily interaction.

On the other hand, we were also beginning to understand the nature of on line courses. First of all, students must have a sense ahead of time of the structure and nature of the course. Secondly, the course must be built around solid texts that students can purchase or down load. Assignments should be regular and repetitive in form, and deadlines should be clear and definite. Third, it is clear that online communication is not spontaneous. This has advantages and disadvantages. Students have time to reflect and revise before sending responses which probably makes for better answers, but, on the other hand instructor response to individual students may have more lag time and students don't get the immediate reaction to an idea thrown into the ether. Student interaction is an essential part of the online courses and for some students online communication removes some of the perceived social barriers of face-to-face contact. Fourth, good writing and language skills are essential to online learn ing. On the other hand, online courses can also enhance students' writing and language skills because of the textual nature of the communication . Finally, although the online components are the framework for the class, there are numerous offline activities that can be used to enhance and lend variety to classes. Reading is the primary offline activity; finding good texts and providing students access to them is very important. You could use television, video, fieldwork (library sources, interviews, guided observation, records of personal activity), CD-ROMs, etc.. The offline activities give much flex iblity to time and space for the course.

My conclusion is that effective courses can be taught over the internet, even though online classes are not for every student or for every type of class; however, most colleges and/or instructors are not ready technically to conduct courses in this medium. Technical expertise is a major factor, maybe the major factor for good teachers. It helps to be endowed doubly with patience and persistence. Nevertheless, for the instructor who feels comfortable with using the internet, likes reading student writing and responding to it, and understands how to structure courses into the online format, this could become pleasant work accomplished in front of her own computer on snowy days.

DISTANCE LEARNERS AND LIBRARIES: WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?

Jennifer L. Wu , librarian at North Seattle Community College and president of College Librarians and Media Specialists of Washington State (CLAMS)

If you are planning to teach a distance learning course, have you checked whether your students have adequate access to information resources and library services? Beyond your prepared course materials, are your students conducting independent library research work as required for your students in the on-campus environment? Often with so many logistic and technical hurdles that a distance learning instructor has to tackle, the library research component is skipped. Some accrediting and licensure agencies are beginning to revise their standards to ensure that ready and equitable library support services are provided to meet the specific needs of distance learning programs.

Technological innovations in communications and information transmission have opened up new possibilities for meeting students' information needs. The variety of resources and services that are available to students is much greater in the digital environment. New formats including multimedia and interactive items can be transmitted over electronic networks. With proper funding support, the potential for providing quality library service is exciting. Some of the services that are being currently offered at institutions with established distance learning programs are as follows:

- Library catalogs, periodical indexes, full-text articles and electronic reference resources can be accessed from remote sites. Requests for materials can be transmitted via electronic forms. Materials can be delivered via mail or courier systems.
- With proper copyright clearance and under the fair use

guidelines, supplementary reading materials can be faxed or scanned for electronic delivery. Articles can also be purchased from commercial sources and sent directly to students.

• Reference assistance can be provided via email, or a toll-free phone or fax number, so students can send in reference questions and discuss library research needs.

Also, interactive reference sessions can be conducted via desktop videoconferencing to remote users.

• Subject-related Web resource links can be prepared to meet specific course or program needs.

• Email- or Web-based instructional materials can be designed to instill independent and effective information literacy skills in students. As the complexity and unevenness of our information resources increase, students must learn to understand and navigate with critical evaluative skills through this rapidly evolving world of information.

Distance learning is still an academic issue, full of uncertainty and controversy. Individual differential ability to access highly-priced equipment and network resources creates an uneven field. But students, on-campus or off-campus, deserve our commitment to provide ready and equitable library service and learning resources.

10 BIG MYTHS ABOUT COPYRIGHT EXPLAINED

An attempt to answer common myths about copyright seen on the net and cover issues related to copyright and USENET/Internet publication.
- by Brad Templeton

This is an essay about copyright myths. Copyright is basically the legal exclusive right of the author of a creative work to control the copying of that work.

1) "If it doesn't have a copyright notice, it's not copyrighted."

This was true in the past, but today almost all major nations follow the Berne copyright convention. For example, in the USA, almost everything created privately and originally after April 1, 1989 is copyrighted and protected whether it has a notice or not. The default you should assume for other people's works is that they are copyrighted and may not be copied unless you know otherwise. There are some old works that lost protection without notice, but frankly you should not risk it unless you know for sure.

It is true that a notice strengthens the protection, by warning people, and by allowing one to get more and different damages, but it is not necessary. If it looks copy righted, you should assume it is. This applies to pictures, too. You may not scan pictures from magazines and post them to the net, and if you come upon something unknown, you shouldn't post that either.

The correct form for a notice is: "Copyright [dates] by [author/owner]" You can use C in a circle © instead of "Copy right" but "(C)" has never been given legal force. The phrase "All Rights Reserved" used to be required in some nations but is now not needed.

2) "If I don't charge for it, it's not a violation."

False. Whether you charge can affect the damages awarded in court, but that's essentially the only difference. It's still a violation if you give it away -- and there can still be heavy damages if you hurt the commercial value of the property.

3) "If it's posted to Usenet it's in the public domain."

False. Nothing modern is in the public domain anymore unless the owner explicitly puts it in the public domain(*). Explicitly, as in you have a note from the author/owner saying, "I grant this to the public domain." Those exact words or words very much like them.

Some argue that posting to Usenet implicitly grants permission to everybody to copy the posting within fairly wide bounds, and others feel that Usenet is an automatic store and forward network where all the thousands of copies made are done at the command (rather than the consent) of the poster. This is a matter of some debate, but even if the former is true (and in this writer's opinion we should all pray it isn't true) it simply would suggest posters are implicitly granting permissions "for the sort of copying one might expect when one posts to Usenet" and in no case is this a placement of material into the public domain. Furthermore it is very difficult for an implicit license to supersede an explicitly stated licence that the copier was aware of.

Note that all this assumes the poster had the right to post the item in the first place. If the poster

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didn't, then all the copies are pirate, and no implied licence or theoretical reduction of the copyright can take place.

(*) Copyrights can expire after a long time, putting something into the public domain, and there are some fine points on this issue regarding older copyright law versions. However, none of this applies to an original article posted to USENET.

Note that granting something to the public domain is a complete abandonment of all rights. You can't make some thing "PD for non-commercial use." If your work is PD, other people can even modify one byte and put their name on it.

4) "My posting was just fair use!"

The "fair use" exemption to copyright law was created to allow things such as commentary, parody, news reporting, research and education about copyrighted works without the permission of the author. Intent, and damage to the commercial value of the work are important considerations. Are you reproducing an article from the New York Times because you needed to in order to criticise the quality of the New York Times, or because you couldn't find time to write your own story, or didn't want your readers to have to pay for the New York Times web site? The first is probably fair use, the others probably aren't.

Fair use is almost always a short excerpt and almost always attributed. (One should not use more of the work than is necessary to make the commentary.) It should not harm the commercial value of the work -- in the sense of people no longer needing to buy it (which is another reason why reproduction of the entire work is generally forbidden.)

Note that most inclusion of text in Usenet followups is for commentary and reply, and it doesn't damage the commercial value of the original posting (if it has any) and as such it is fair use. Fair use isn't an exact doctrine, either. The court decides if the right to comment overrides the copyright on an individual basis in each case. There have been cases that go beyond the bounds of what I say above, but in general they don't apply to the typical net misclaim of fair use. It's a risky defence to attempt.

Facts and ideas can't be copyrighted, but their expression and structure can. You can always write the facts in your own words.

5) "If you don't defend your copyright you lose it." -- "Somebody has that name copyrighted!"

False. Copyright is effectively never lost these days, unless explicitly given away. You also can't "copyright a name" or anything short like that, such as almost all titles. You may be thinking of trade marks, which apply to names, and can be weakened or lost if not defended.

You generally trademark terms by using them to refer to your brand of a generic type of product or service., like an "Apple" computer. Apple Computer "owns" that word applied to computers, even though it is also an ordinary word. Apple Records owns it when applied to music. Neither owns the word on its own, only in context, and owning a mark doesn't mean complete control .

You can't use somebody else's trademark in a way that would unfairly hurt the value of the mark, or in a way that might make people confuse you with the real owner of the mark, or which might allow you to profit from the mark's good name. For example, if I were giving advice on music videos, I would be very wary of trying to label my works with a name like "mtv." :-)

6) "If I make up my own stories, but base them on another work, my new work belongs to me."

False. Copyright law is quite explicit that the making of what are called "derivative works" -- works based or derived from another copyrighted work -- is the exclusive province of the owner of the original work. This is true even though the making of these new works is a highly creative process. If you write a story using settings or characters from somebody else's work, you need that author's permission.

Yes, that means almost all "fan fiction" is a copyright violation. If you want to write a story about Jim Kirk and Mr. Spock, you need Paramount's permission, plain and simple. Now, as it turns out, many, but not all holders of popular copyrights turn a blind eye to "fan fiction" or even subtly encourage it because it helps them. Make no mistake, however, that it is entirely up to them whether to do that.

There is one major exception -- parody. The fair use provision says that if you want to make fun of something like Star Trek, you don't need their permission to include Mr. Spock. This is not a loophole; you can't just take a non-parody and claim it is one on a technicality. The way "fair use" works is you get sued for

copyright in fringement, and you admit you did infringe, but that your infringement was a fair use. A subjective judgement is then made.

7) "They can't get me, defendants in court have powerful rights!"

Copyright law is mostly civil law. If you violate copyright you would usually get sued, not charged with a crime. "Innocent until proven guilty" is a principle of criminal law, as is "proof beyond a reasonable doubt." Sorry, but in copyright suits, these don't apply the same way or at all. It's mostly which side and set of evidence the judge or jury accepts or believes more, though the rules vary based on the type of infringement. In civil cases you can even be made to testify against your own interests.

8) "Oh, so copyright violation isn't a crime or anything?"

Actually, recently in the USA commercial copyright violation involving more than 10 copies and value over $2500 was made a felony. So watch out. (At least you get the protections of criminal law.) On the other hand, don't think you're going to get people thrown in jail for posting your E-mail. The courts have much better things to do than that. This is a fairly new, un tested statute.

9) "It doesn't hurt anybody -- in fact it's free advertising."

It's up to the owner to decide if they want the free ads or not. If they want them, they will be sure to contact you. Don't rationalize whether it hurts the owner or not, ask them. Usually that's not too hard to do. Time past, ClariNet published the very funny Dave Barry column to a large and appreciative Usenet audience for a fee, but some person didn't ask, and forwarded it to a mailing list, got caught, and the newspaper chain that employs Dave Barry pulled the column from the net, pissing off everybody who enjoyed it. Even if you can't think of how the author or owner gets hurt, think about the fact that piracy on the net hurts everybody who wants a chance to use this wonderful new technology to do more than read other people's flamewars.

10) "They e-mailed me a copy, so I can post it."

To have a copy is not to have the copyright. All the E -mail you write is copy righted. However, E-mail is not , unless previously agreed, secret. So you can certainly report on what E -mail you are sent, and reveal what it says. You can even quote parts of it to demonstrate. Frankly, somebody who sues over an ordinary message would almost surely get no damages, because the message has no commercial value, but if you want to stay strictly in the law, you should ask first. On the other hand, don't go nuts if somebody posts E -mail you sent them. If it was an ordinary non-secret personal letter of minimal commercial value with no copyright notice (like 99.9% of all E-mail), you probably won't get any damages if you sue them. Note as well that, the law aside, keeping private correspondence private is a courtesy one should usually honour.

11) "So I can't ever reproduce anything?"

Myth #11 (I didn't want to change the now -famous title of this article) is actually one sometimes generated in response to this list of 10 myths. No, copyright isn't an iron -clad lock on what can be published. Indeed, by many arguments of providing reward to authors, it encourages them to not just allow, but fund the publication and distribution of works so that they reach far more people than they would if they were free or unprotected. However, it must be remembered that copyright has two main purposes, namely the protection of the author's right to obtain commercial benefit from valuable work, and more recently the protection of the author's general right to control how a work is used.

While copyright law makes it technically illegal to reproduce almost any new creative work (other than under fair use) without permission, if the work is unregistered and has no real commercial value, it gets very little protection. The author in this case can sue for an injunction against the publication, actual damages from a violation, and possibly court costs. Actual damages means actual money potentially lost by the author due to publication, plus any money gained by the defendant. But if a work has no commercial value, such as a typical E -mail message or conversational USENET posting, the actual damages will be zero. Only the most vindictive (and rich) author would sue when no damages are possible, and the courts don't look kindly on vindictive plaintiffs, unless the defendants are even more vindictive.

The author's right to control

what is done with a work however has some validity, even if it has no commercial value. If you feel you need to violate a copyright "because you can get away with it because the work has no value" you should ask your self why you're doing it. In general respecting the rights of creators to control their creations is a principle many advocate adhering to.

In addition, while more often than not people claim a "fair use" copying incorrectly, fair use is a valid concept necessary to allow the criticism of copyrighted works and their creators through examples. But please read more about it before you do it.

In Summary

* These days, almost all things are copyrighted the moment they are written, and no copyright notice is required.
* Copyright is still violated whether you charged money or not, and only damages are affected by that.
* Postings to the net are not granted to the public domain, and don't grant you any permission to do further copying except perhaps the sort of copying the poster might have expected in the ordinary flow of the net.
* Fair use is a complex doctrine meant to allow certain valuable social purposes. Ask yourself why you are republishing what you are posting and why you couldn't have just rewritten it in your own words.
* Copyright is not lost because you don't defend it; that's a concept from trademark law. The ownership of names is also from trademark law, so don't say somebody has a name copyrighted.
* Fan fiction and other work derived from copyrighted works is a copyright violation.
* Copyright law is mostly civil law where the special rights of criminal defendants you hear so much about don't apply. Watch out, however, as new laws are moving copy right violation into the criminal realm.
* Don't rationalize that you are helping the copyright holder; often it's not that hard to ask permission.
* Posting E -mail is technically a violation, but revealing facts from E-mail you got isn't, and for almost all typical E -mail, nobody could wring any damages from you for posting it. The law doesn't do much to protect works with no commercial value.

Might it be a violation just to link to a web page? That's not a myth, it's undecided, but I have written some discussion of linking rights issues.

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DEVELOPING INTERACTIVE CLASSROOMS

Denise Yokum , Big Bend Community College

Big Bend Community College, Spokane Community College, Wenatchee Valley College, and Washington State University were invited to attend an educational summit in the Grand Coulee Dam

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area in the fall of 1995. Citizens of the greater Grand Coulee Dam area convened the summit.

Representatives were present from the Grand Coulee Dam Joint School District, the Chamber of Commerce, the Colville Confederated Tribe, and all other major employers in the area. The purpose was to discuss education and training needs in the community, and ways to meet these needs. The greater Grand Coulee Dam area has not been well served in previous years, due to its rural location and distance from the four colleges, ranging from 50 to 100 miles. Its low population base further compounds the distance problem.

The summit identified a need for academic education and for computer training. Big Bend Community College offered to provide these courses, and the other colleges agreed to lend support where needed.

Big Bend Community College worked with the community and found they were interested in an educational program that was interactive. Big Bend was already providing educational opportunities utilizing on-site instruction and telecourses, so they began looking at the possibility of developing an interactive classroom link between Grand Coulee and Moses Lake. The classrooms will have two-way audio and two-way visual which will provide and encourage interaction between the students and the instructor. However, cost is a prohibitive factor.

In April of 1995, Big Bend received a request for proposals from the US West Foundation to serve Running Start students via distance learning. BBCC began conversations with the Grand Coulee Dam Joint School District, and both parties agreed to write a proposal for the interactive classrooms.

The main focus of the proposal is to use the interactive classrooms to give Running Start students the opportunity to take classes that would count for both high school and college credit. The proposal was funded for $100,000 and will be instrumental in developing the greater Grand Coulee Dam area interactive classroom.

This project will pilot one Running Start course in the spring of 1997. We plan to have two Running Start classes in the fall of 1997 and three classes by the fall of 1998. In addition to the Running Start classes, other academic transfer courses will be offered. Eventually, students will be able to receive an academic transfer degree without leaving the greater Grand Coulee Dam area. As part of the instructional component students can use library services via the internet, get advising via desktop conferencing, and have e-mail access to their instructors and other students. A computer lab will be installed and ongoing management training will be offered to meet local training needs.

A unique feature of this project is the collaborative efforts it is spawning. In addition to the partnership with the US West Foundation, several other partnerships have formed. The Grand Coulee Dam Joint School District is providing the facility to house the BBCC Learn ing Center. The facilities will consist of one interactive classroom, one regular classroom, a computer lab, and an office for the area coordinator. The Institute for Extended Learning of the Spokane Community colleges has agreed to donate six computers for the computer lab. Big Bend is beginning extended conversations with the Colville Confederated Tribe and Wenatchee Valley College. WSU has recently unveiled a plan to request funding for a Learning Center in BBCC's district. A major function of WSU's center will be to serve the upper division educational needs of the greater Grand Coulee Dam area. The partners are looking for ways to incorporate other private and public agencies in this partnership.

BBCC is looking forward to a long and prosperous relationship with the citizens in the greater Grand Coulee Dam area. We believe that by combining a variety of delivery methods, we will be able to provide a quality educational and training experience to the people within our district.

DISTANCE EDUCATION, TECHNOLOGY AND THE FACULTY

Ron Gilster & Ann Suter, Communications Technology Center

"All technology should be assumed guilty until proven innocent."
David Brower

There is a great deal of discussion these days concerning technology, distance education, and their various aliases:

multimedia, video teleconferencing, distance learning, alternative instruction delivery, distributed education, etc. These discussions revolve around issues such as efficiency, service, access and outreach. But, if you listen carefully you can hear a quiet voice straining to be heard concerned with faculty and content issues. These issues must come as first priorities in infusing technology into instruction.

The infusion of technology into instruction and the expansion of distance education are considered future issues to most faculty. Unfortunately, this is not completely true. Also not true is the notion that very little can be done today to take advantage of emerging technology advancements and to prepare ourselves for the higher education world of tomorrow.

Computing and distance education have moved from fringe activities of the institution to options for student access to higher education. The use of technology in education has become a burgeoning industry in its own right with several startup universities devoted solely to higher education at a distance. Of more immediate financial interest, business and industry are looking at the tools and technologies of distance education as mechanisms for increasing and improving employee training and development programs. There is no dearth of activity in distant education, but what does this mean for the future?

Most important, it means that educators will have to be more familiar with the range of technologies and their applications as they consider how to provide students with a learning experience. In many cases, these technologies provide the mode to permit students to participate in or see lectures in a different time and space, to communicate with the instructor, to access class and library information and to interact with fellow students. In the future these technologies will become part and parcel of the design of instruction.

The biggest "yeah, but" we hear about applying technology to teaching and learning is the lack of training about the tools and their options. Yes, this is a problem. One of the first priorities for colleges must be to train its workforce, and especially its instructors, in the fundamentals of a wide range of technology applications.

One attempt to address this challenge in training and development for faculty is the development of the "Training Courses at a Distance" project. This project will allow faculty and staff to choose and signup for video, diskette and CD-Rom based courses that they can take on their desktop. A feature of this program is access to self-assessment skill evaluation exercises via the Internet. After determining whether a training course is appropriate, course materials can be ordered via the Internet. A choice of media is available including video tape, diskette, CD-ROM or online formats. The courses can be taken for PIU credit which requires an end-of-course test. The projected cost for any Training @ Distance course is $65.

These courses are provided as a service of the Communication Technology Center (the CTC). It began in the late 1970s as the Washington Community College Computing Consortium (W4Cs) and up until mid-1993 had focused primarily on administrative systems and support issues. The majority of the CTC staff is involved with the design and programming of the standard administrative systems used by the colleges: budget, finance, registration, payroll, purchasing, etc. In addition, the CTC staff provide local and wide area network and Internet support to the colleges.

Then in August, 1993, the CTC board, made up of the presidents of the 33 Washington community and technical colleges and the State Board, committed to providing more direct support in the areas of instructional technology and video telecommunications by creating the Educational Technology and Telecommunications (ET&T) department at the CTC. Ron Gilster, an instructor at Walla Walla CC, and Ann Suter, the director of the UW's CableLearn operations, were hired as full-time resources to provide services directly to the instructional functions of the colleges.

The CTC and ET&T department are dedicated to promoting the best and most appropriate uses of technology in teaching and learning. The entire ET&T staff is available to help with any technology-based problems or questions. You can reach the staff at ET&T via telephone at (206)803-9747 or (509)533-8837, FAX at (206)803-9651 or (509)533-8052, email at institute@ ctc.edu, or visit the ET&T homepage at http://www.ctc.edu/~ett/ for more

information on these and other services.

THE NEXT STEP

Chuck Weedin
Yakima Community College

An interview with President Will Fenster, founder and majority stockholder of CCEE administrative corporation (The Community College Educational Ecstacy Administrative Corporation) - November 29, 1996

Interviewer: President Fenster, I understand you have some exciting points to make about what's next with distance learning technology.

President Fenster: Please, call me Will. Yes, I'd like to boldly suggest that the re-invention of education to reflect the conquest of time and space by technology being well under way, we must turn our attention to Distance Governance and Administration.

Interviewer: OK. How might Distance Governance be done?

Pres. Will: By applying the same models we are using with Distance Learning. Specifically we will: (1) analyze the components of Community College Governance-Administration, (2) prepare a master model, (3) apply it anywhere and everywhere through technology, and (4) hire skilled but reasonably-priced technicians to apply the models at out-sites and handle data invention and flow.

Interviewer: Wow!! You mean....

Pres. Will: Yes, for openers, CCEE admin. corp. will be able to reduce to one the number of key administrators needed to run the state system: one President, one Dean of Instruction, one Chief Business Officer, one of each type, in effect. Perhaps you would call us an administrative Noah's Ark.

Interviewer: Is it so simple?

Pres. Will: Oh, yes, simple; but not easy. We offer a complete four-part system. In addition to the (1) initial system administration plan through the D.T.'s (Dis tance Technologies), we offer (2) com plete but evolving evaluation of performance/outcomes for each campus, (3) problem-solving components, and (4) innovating components. After all, each campus is unique.

Interviewer: Could you explain in a bit more detail how the first step works?

Pres. Will: Surely. In step one, we identify the content (information and skills) necessary under each of the 4 key components, create or purchase the programs necessary to provide this using all the appropriate technology--if English Composition, Psychology, and Spanish can be taught "Distance," so too can Budget Development and Maintenance, Community Building, and Understanding and Meeting Legislative Mandates (an innovative--or is it problem solving--component?). Once these masters courses in governance are developed, they become the property of CCEE admin. services of course, just as faculty developed courses are our property. They will be leased from us and have the advantage of teachability and application by part-time or para-professional staff. Just imagine the considerable financial savings for salary and benefits alone, not to mention executive offices, furniture, and travel.

Interviewer: I can believe that!

Pres. Will: Yes, what's really impressive is the ease of maintenance of the system for Distance Governance. A small number of trained professionals with a few trained support staff can maintain the systems. When adjustments and updating are necessary, we will outsource a professional consultant from the private sector to bid for the hardware, software, and training needed.

Interviewer: Whew! Again, what are the nuts and bolts administrative implications of this?

Pres. Will: Well, first of all, we will provide the full services of President, Vice Presidents for Instruction and Students Services, Business Manager, Human Resource Director, Payroll, and, yes, even Trustees from my company.

Interviewer: One set of administrators to run all the Community Colleges?

Pres. Will: Yes indeed! Now you know that the technologies we use are subject to change overnight. But right now, November 26, 1996, we can have full com puter links on each campus with interactive audio/visual, fax, voice mail and email response, etc. Our technicians, say, the President Tech for Bellevue, for example, will also have his or her cell phone, will be wired for location so we can always find him/her and will continually be upgraded in technological skills to help

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Bellevue people stay in contact with their President here at CCEE admin.

Interviewer: Pres. Will, could you give me an example how one person could serve as President for 33 Community Colleges?

Pres. Will: Surely. Let's assume individual campus Presidential Technicians (we're currently calling them PT's) have been fielding questions having to do with capital projects; i.e., parking lots, leaking roofs, needs for a new building, etc. So here's the procedure:

(1) PT's schedule a meeting with all locally concerned (I will hold one meeting but it will be available on demand with suitable local digital updates and modifications) .

(2) PT's will have fielded low level/background questions and will provide local data to our office which is then plugged into our developing game model " A-mazing Capital Projects ." In this model, such things as federal, legislative and legal factors are the fixed challenges.

(3) I will "meet" with each campus, provide background data, distribute handouts as planned or required at each site by fax, etc., answer general questions with some "face-to-face" exchanges via T.V. links.

(4) PT's will encode and transmit emerging data during the meeting. In the "personal game" portion of the meeting, I will appear on each campus through digital technology as their own local president. My character will, as in a modern computer game, meet and overcome the obstacles unique to each district. What we're doing here is applying computer technology and distance learning to governance. Today, senators no longer have to deal personally with their constituents, nor do teachers deal directly with their students in classrooms, or college presidents with the local community. We are in the age of the DT's (Distance Technicians).

Interviewer: You know, it sounds like. . .

Pres. Will: Right you are! Makes you wonder why one Senator and one Representative can't get the job done with technology. After all we only have one President for the whole country. . .

Interviewer: President Fenster, I've taken far too much of your time and am really indebted to you for sharing your bold proposal. Do you have any other ideas you would like to share in closing?

Pres. Will: You've been a great listener, and I'm willing to share, off the record , our conceptual framework. [Ed. note: Ha! Nothing's off the record today. Take it away, Will!] We really see this as an extension of the Oz-onian Principle . You remember that the master technician in The Wizard of Oz was able to teach, inspire, and even address issues of intelligence and bravery by utilizing his admittedly crude technologies. Imagine what we can do today! There are those who feel that PIC's (Personal Individual Connections) are critical in the teaching-learning business, but we think technology can provide all the PIC's you need. Notice how you start talking back to your phone messages? In fact, you may have wondered why we talk about Educational Ecstacy . The answer is we will enhance our technological treatment of individuals we deal with to include references to those acceptable things that energize them and give their lives meaning, like sports, shopping, gardening, romance.

We have sufficient data now on the individual that manipulating messages to include joy elements will be simple. We are then, at CCEE admin. corp. driven by our belief in QEPT = Quality-Economy-Perfectibility-Technology.

Interviewer: Unbelievable.

Pres. Will: Right, but there you are!

AT THE WASHINGTON CENTER TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

Barbara Guilland, Leslie Michael, Ann Swanson, Big Bend; Phyllis Villeneuve, SPSCC

The Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education offered a conference titled "Technology on A Human Scale: Teaching and Learning in the Information Age," Feb. 13-15. It provided attendees with much food for thought in reference to the use of technological tools in the classroom. I especially enjoyed the session, "Network Pedagogy and the Classroom Local Area Network: What We Have Lost and What We Have Gained," led by Mark Lester of Eastern Washington University and Helen Fox and Wayne Butler of the University of Michigan. I have been brought into the technological age at warp speed by having both my workspace and my homespace, laptop and all,

networked. This has led me to question balancing both learning environments, the seminar and computer classrooms. It has also made me aware of how much I still have to learn about the usage of this tool. We definitely gain some things and lose others through the use of technology, and balancing both is a challenge. This was the main focus of the session and my concerns/problems were reiterated by all. Helen Fox stated that technology doesn't replace good teaching but simply enhances it. However, technology can not do the same for bad teaching. Educators need to see technology as just another tool to complement all the other learning methodologies. Technology gives us the ability to create a more interactive, integrated, collaborative learning environment on a grander scale. However, this is no easy task. As facilitators, we have a responsibility to suggest that our students question resources and use discernment when gathering information.

The session also looked at the Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment as a technological tool to teach writing. This is one software I think aids the interactive and collaborative aspects of the writing process. Understanding the software is relatively simple but putting it to use in the classroom is a continually evolving process much like that of writing itself and takes a great deal more time.

TESC/Tacoma Community College presented a session titled "When the Focus is Family, Job, and Community--Technology and the TESC-Tacoma Story." Tracing their campus history from Desk Writer to Multi-media Cyberspace illustrated the possibilities for incoporating several levels of technology into the classroom. The assignments demonstrated demanded interaction between students on campus and their surrounding community. For oral histories students compiled a collage of taped interviews and filmed subjects. For a museum exhibit, students created a multi-media presentation covering many aspects of their community's culture and history. For a WEB site brochure, students researched the Tacoma area for all available services for people suffering any personal crisis. The presenters emphasized using technology in the process as well as the product. Their examples illustrated how technologies can bring people together to create useful products that can serve, educate, or entertain their community as well as teach the preocess of learning about new equipment and generating creative possibilites with new mediums.

Another session emphasizing how technology can tighten the connection between students and their communities was "Collaboratory: Physical Places, Virtual Spaces." Colloboratory is an international initiative which brings together students K-16, museum personnel, corporate staff, and members of charitable organizations. Based on the notion that education is neither a time nor a place but a process, the hub of activity is both in the local communities as well as on Walden 3, a virtual community on the Internet. Teams of students work on their own interpretations of culture by creating museum exhibits and displaying these in their local museums. They share both the process of this work and their community service projects (an integral part of the overall initiative) with their peers on Walden 3.

A session called "Thinking Through Technology" addressed changes that any advance in technology brings to any culture. Dr. Shari Popen shared the course description of her Seminar in Educational Philosophy (EdAF 512) at WWU. She listed ten principles that Neil Postman (*The End of Education* , Knopf, 1995) uses to draw the distinction between using technology and understanding what its use means to the culture. I include them here as presented in her course description:

1. All technological change is a Faustian bargain. For every advantage a new technology offers, there is a corresponding disadvantage.
2. The advantages and disadvantages of new technologies are never distributed evenly among the population. This means that every new technology benefits some and harms others.
3. Embedded in every technology is a powerful idea, sometimes two or three powerful ideas. Like language itself, a technology predisposes us to favor and value certain perspectives and accomplishments and to subordinate others. Every technology has a philosophy, which is given expression in how technology makes people use their minds, in what it makes us do with our bodies, in how it codifies the world, in which of our senses it amplifies, in which of our emotional and intellectual tendencies it disregards.

4. A new technology usually makes war against an old technology. It competes with it for time, attention, money, prestige, and a 'world view.'
5. Technological change is not additive; it is ecological. A new technology does not merely add something; it changes everything.
6. Because of the symbolic forms in which information is encoded, different technologies have different intellectual and emotional biases.

7. Because of the accessibility and speed of their information, different technologies have different political biases.
8. Because of their physical form, different technologies have different sensory biases.
9. Because of the condition in which we attend them, different technologies have different social biases.
10. Because of the technical and economic structure, different technologies have different content biases.

This session was well attended, indicating perhaps that even though we may have embraced technology, we're trying to go into this marriage with our eyes open.

If our association with computer technology is still in the dark ages stage of trying to figure out how to get our e-mail messages up to read, never mind sending any, or worse trying to remember all our passwords and deal with the machine's refusals, Chet Bowers of Portland State University warns us away from simplistic thinking, whether it's conspiracy plots and evil empire paranoia or panaceas and the wonderful world of computers as the dawning of a new age of sensibility. He spoke on "The Non-neutrality of Technology" or "Teacher Responsibility in the Digital Phase of the Industrial Revolution." He states that technology is not just a tool but a mediator of culture. It is the nature of technology that whatever is gained is always at the expense of something else that is lost. He shared numerous examples of what we take for granted as ways of seeing the world--our sense of time, of sources of knowledge (or wisdom) and the need to understand language and the cultural context of our data and thinking, of our sense of individuality versus reciprocity in relationships. Teachers have a responsibility to know both content and a deep knowledge of the cultural context of that content. We neeed to more critically evaluate changes. We need to help students see from a variety of points of view, to learn historical perspective, and to do critical evaluation. We cannot think critically or act constructively if we do not even know what alternatives exist.

These sessions and several others remind us that implementing the use of technology in an interacive, collaborative, academically integrated manner that is of benefit to the majority is the difficult task at hand. It's hard work and will take time and we need to help each other. We need the students to help us too. This will lead to more positive changes that good teachers have already been making for years by inspiring young and old minds to stretch and explore new ideas. Educatiors need to be the guides to facilitate discrimination in the wealth of resources made available. Technology in no way replaces the essentials of good teaching: cooperative learning, presenting materials in a variety of ways, collaborative projects, peer teaching, etc. It simply provides one more way to put it all together for the greatest good for the greatest number, assuming we use these tools thoughtfully.

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE QUALITY PRINCIPLES IN DISTANCE LEARNING RETREAT

Bill Moore, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

About 30 educators from around the state gathered in Federal Way January 24 -25 at a retreat sponsored by SBCTC and the Communications Technology Consortium entitled "Quality Learning Principles in a Distributed Learning Context." The goal was to convene a group of folks experienced in current "distance" and technology -mediated learning to share examples of effective practice and to explore the notion of quality. The discussions were lively, varied and valuable overall, even though a concise set of "principles" did not emerge by the end of the retreat (in part, I think, because people were hard -pressed to define how fundamental learning quality would be distinctly different in "distance" learning compared to "normal" learning). Three underlying "first questions" ran through the whole effort, questions which need to be addressed explicitly throughout the educational enterprise, not just to distance or online courses.

1) What are the fundamental purposes of postsecondary education (college) for students (and who decides what those purposes are)?
Comments: To acquire information? Learn a skill, or a trade? Get a credential? Gain the abilities necessary to be successful after college in a variety of roles--e.g., worker, citizen, learner, . . .? These aims are quite different, although by no means mutually exclusive. Moreover, who decides what purposes are appropriate --the student (as "consumer"), the faculty member (as "expert"), the employer or society at large, . . .?

With respect to "online instruction," a number of faculty noted that developing or translating a course for an online context helped them define the essential core of what needed to be shared with students and in what ways. That clarification process helped them separate and enhance the range of distinctive agendas/purpose inherent in most courses—i.e., content delivery/information exchange, skills, and thinking/judgment processes. The design and adaptation process seemed to be a powerful metacognitive opportunity for faculty. Also, according to several retreat participants, one specific academic purpose enhanced by the integration of online resources into existing courses relates to students' finding and using effectively the enormous range of information resources available to them via the World Wide Web (WWW):
1) exposure to different perspectives and ways of thinking, 2) information literacy (seeking and analyzing range of material available), 3) problem - finding and problem -solving. As Lester Faigley described it at the recent Washington Center conference on technology, using the WWW is like using a library with the card catalogue strewn randomly on the floor, with no clear cues for students as to the value and/or credibility of any particular site or piece of information available. While there are clearly dangers in such an "anything goes" environment, retreat participants generally felt that the access to resources not otherwise available and the teaching potential related to the areas cited above outweighed the negatives.

2) What are the most significant functions for faculty in helping achieve these purposes, and what tools and resources do they use in accomplishing these functions?
Comments: At its most basic, learning involves students being exposed to material, situations, or experiences (broadly defined); having some opportunity to reflect on that exposure and integrate an understanding of what has been encountered into one's current knowledge and understanding; and having a chance to demonstrate for themselves and for an external audience (typically, but not necessarily, the teacher) the extent to which some learning has been achieved (assessment and feedback). Teachers have a key role to play in that process, whatever form it takes, but as Finkel and Monk noted in 1983 ("Teachers and Learning Groups: Dissolution of the Atlas Complex," in Bouton and Garth (eds.), Learning in Groups), it's considerably more useful—and educationally more powerful—to think of "teaching" as a set of functions to be accomplished in a learning context than as a single role fulfilled by only one person, namely the "teacher." Diana Laurillard, the vice -provost for the British Open University, in a provocative 1993 book called

Rethinking University Teaching , extends that argument in suggesting that the teaching/learning context has four major functions or characteristics: discursive, adaptive, interactive, and reflective.
Discursive : making teachers' and students' conceptions of the topic at hand accessible to each other and part of the public discourse of learning .
Adaptive : shifting the emphasis or focus of the process depending on how the learning is proceeding .
Interactive : engaging students at a practical level (getting them to actually do something) and getting feedback on those efforts.
Reflective : students linking their feedback back to the topic goal/s and articulating to the teacher (and themselves) their new under-standing/s.
Laurillard then uses this conceptual framework to evaluate the array of currently available technological resources and tools for the extent to which they support or enhance these functions, based on the purposes for learning involved. The central question here, regardless of the medium or tool involved, is one of instructional design: as a faculty member, how can I create a rich and engaging learning environment for and with students that I believe will do the best job of accomplishing the learning purposes at hand? Educational technology of various forms can extend the tools at my disposal to address this design question, but it only represents tools, not an end or purpose for its own sake.

Faculty at the retreat noted that in their experience the online teaching/learning context seemed to encourage a new kind of collaborative approach to working with their peers. Given that it is difficult for most faculty to accomplish this kind of work on their own, they needed to seek out and learn from colleagues, and that process proved to be beneficial. In the actual online teaching context, several participants were pleasantly surprised that their role seemed to shift away from being the sole authority for the students to more of a facilitator/ participant (through the various communication formats used—e.g., email, electronic bulletin boards or listservs, etc.). Faculty were also quick to point out that teaching online takes a lot of time, especially the first 2 -3 times one does it, and that changing technology demands tends to mean that faculty have to keep re-learning some of the tools involved in making such a learning context work smoothly.

In terms of a shift in the student's role or function, retreat participants were clear that among other things online learning demands a high level of independence and attention. These demands seem to have surprised many students involved in such courses to date, as witnessed by a relatively low completion rate, with several faculty reporting figures in the 25 -50% range. Beyond the issue of independence and being self -directed learners, online learning demands that students read a great deal of material—texts, Web site information, email, etc. --and forces students to communicate virtually **everything** in written form. These demands are certainly problematic for some students, but they also can represent valuable and appropriate skill -building challenges when managed properly.

3) How do we assess/certify that students have accomplished these purposes without relying exclusively on traditional "proxy" measures, and in ways that contribute to and reinforce the learning process?
Comments: Just as instructional design and pedagogical concerns vary to some extent depending on the core learning purposes involved, so do assessment approaches—yet often too little thought is given to whether the assessment methods support and reflect the learning involved. Once again the key is having a diverse array of tools and approaches—from multiple -choice or short-answer tests to extended group projects over time, portfolio processes, self -evaluations, simulations, etc. The current emphasis is on finding ways to assess complex student learning abilities or competencies in a more performance -oriented way.

Responses to this question were arguably the most difficult and least-developed of any of the issues discussed by the retreat participants. For those faculty teaching composition online, the amount and variety of writing expected was a rich source of assessment information regarding the student's learning. Faculty in other disciplines seemed to be less sure about assessing student learning with confidence. The online or "distance" context puts a premium on the abilities and performance context noted above. With less opportunity for

face-to-face observations on the part of the faculty member, how can an appropriate range of tasks and assignments be generated to provide adequate opportunities for the students to demonstrate the learning expected of them? This retreat was the beginning, not the end, of a system -wide focus on how we can incorporate educational technology and "distance" learning modes into our instruction to serve more students more effectively. A more detailed summary of the retreat discussions around specific quality learning principles will be available soon from the SBCTC office, and it is likely that there will be additional structured events designed to refine and clarify these principles. Our hope is that they will serve ultimately as guideposts for any future system -wide or collaborative "distance learning" course development efforts in Washington.

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The Faculty Association of Community Technical Colleges is an organization composed of faculty representa-tives from all participating community colleges and technical institutions within the State of Washington - dedicated to the task of improving communication between the various campuses and to the other members of the community and technical college system. As one of its purposes, FACTC undertakes projects such as this publication, designed to support faculty participation in the operation of the community and technical college system.

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